Turning Students’ Empathy into Action with Digital Tools

Building social and emotional learning (SEL) skills like empathy requires face-to-face interactions, meaningful discussions, and time for reflection. But this doesn’t mean that digital tools and online resources can’t also play a part. Here are three ways to use edtech tools that not only help your students build empathy, but also empower them to make an impact in the world.

Tips for Using EdTech in Your Empathy Curriculum

• Model and practice digital citizenship in your classroom:
  • Set high expectations, and help students see how our feelings are connected to our behaviors.
  • Use a balance of online and in-person communication, and make sure technology doesn’t needlessly replace face-to-face interaction.
  • Using our Digital Citizenship Curriculum? Both our student interactives and lessons already foster key SEL skills.

• Introduce kids to different perspectives and people from different backgrounds:
  • Connect students with others from around the globe.
  • Get students thinking about their similarities and differences.
  • Engage kids in perspective-taking exercises, such as tackling challenging, open-ended dilemmas with no clear right or wrong answers.

• Help your students turn empathy into action:
  • Inspire them with stories and projects produced by other kids, and give your students the tools and space to create their own.
  • Help students use a problem-solving approach when working to overcome obstacles.
  • Empower them to promote and share their work with an authentic audience beyond the walls of your classroom.

More Resources for Teaching Empathy

- CASEL - www.casel.org
- Character Lab - characterlab.org
- Edutopia - www.edutopia.org/social-emotional-learning
- Start Empathy - startempathy.org
- Teaching Tolerance - www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/tolerance-lessons/developing-empathy